

**Custom-House Furniture.**

On the 16th of April, 1851, Mr. CUTTS authorized Mr. Joseph Haugh, a broker in New-York, to make a contract or contracts with suitable workmen to supply the custom-house with furniture, in pursuance of a letter of instructions to Mr. Haugh, for his government in the discharge of the duties imposed on him, which are very specific, and which are as follows:—

"That he should select and purchase, at the lowest possible cost, and there, with them, was upon Mr. Frazer, who will exhibit the plans and drawings of the furniture to be made, and who will select and superintend the work, in his satisfaction the manner in which the same should be done." Again the instructions, Mr. Haugh—When you are prepared with any man or men with whom you think an agreement will be made, and who will be able to furnish the work, or a portion of it, bring the man to me, and I am satisfied with the work, and approve I could be with your judgment, and then I will give the order to the collector to call on the manufacturer in the new custom-house was made, not so Mr. Haugh went with them to Mr. Frazer to see his plans and drawings, and then he went to the collector, and he obeyed the order of the collector, to bring the men to him, with whom he might contract for the whole work, or a portion of it, and the purpose of the collector was to reduce the prices before the contract was closed. These gross frauds, carefully inserted in the instructions, which, doubtless, were intended to effect, would, by coming into the hands of the manufacturer, have increased the prices at which the work should have been undertaken, were wholly undesired, and Mr. Haugh took the responsibility, without selecting a name, and without the responsibility, with whom the contract was made. In his letter to the collector of the 20th of April, 1851, he says:—I have made an inspection of the cabinet-makers, and have selected Mr. Morgan

Mr. Gould testifies concerning these young men as follows: "The persons now employed to do the printing are James G. Felt and Joseph Waite. James G. Felt is a printer. The printers for the Custom House, in part, are Thomas G. Waite and Joseph Waite; my journeymen are employed by me to do the printing, and are paid for at per centum on the way they do the work. James G. Felt and Joseph Waite are practical printers, but have no office or printing establishment of their own, and therefore use mine, as above stated. James G. Felt and Joseph Waite are now in New York. Curtis gave the printing of the Custom House to these two journeyman printers, without material to execute the work. He took the work from the hands of the journeymen, of whom there were many in the city of New York, gave explanations which have not been given; and has since been making a large number of bills, and has the effect that the persons employed were his own journeymen, and they had no use of their own to supply stationery to him, and he has been making a large number of bills at their own extravagant rates, while it is known that at that time they had obtained the articles from some wholesale establishment, at rates far below those charged to the Custom-House. The bills were submitted to Mr. Felt, and were by him estimated at more than 100 per cent, above the selling prices in New-York. A few examples will serve to show the general character of these bills: The supply of stationery to the Brooklyn store, the bill rendered charges the following prices:

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**Custom House Sales of Burnt and Unclaimed Goods by Auction.**

connected with the subject of storehouses and, the evidence relating to the sale of the same, saved from the burning of the public storehouse street will be noticed, with the circumstances attending this transaction, presented in general terms, according to the facts proved to the commissioners. The result of the trial will appear from the following report of the clerk of the custom-house, to which is appended the receipt of Mr. Wetmore, the public keeper.

Statement of sales of goods saved from the great fire at the Custom House No. 261 Front street, (referred to in the petition of John A. Craig.)

Amount of sales.....	\$ 8,615 00
Commission.....	12,715 00

The result of this sale, according to all the evidence, except that of one or two of the guilty custom-house officers, was that every valuable heap of lot was bid off by these officers or their accomplices, while great losses were sustained by those bidders who were not in the secret.

John D. Phillips, a witness, who attended these sales, testifies that Mr. Caspar Marks, a dealer in dry goods, purchased a lot at two hundred dollars of thereabouts, being one of those lots in which no perceptible difference could be discovered, and next to or near to some of those lots which brought about thirty or forty dollars. On the day following the sale, meeting Mr. Marks in Pearl street, I mentioned the circumstance to him, and asked him how he liked the bargain.

"Oh," said he, "I knew what I was about; but my information cost me a hundred or a hundred and fifty dollars;" and, from further remarks, I learned that Marks intended to understand that he had bought in collusion, or with collusion, with some of those custom-house officers who was in the secret as to the arrangement of the

under the deceptive guise of a patriotic devotion to the public interest, and an ardent desire, in the discharge of his official duties, to protect the public revenue from frauds and invasions. For more particular detail of what occurred in relation to these damaged goods, saved from the fire, and the conduct of the collector, reference is made to the testimony of Mr. Harris. Other witnesses have testified on the subject, but the evidence of Mr. Harris enters more at large into all these transactions; and, from the respectability and unimpeachable intelligence of the witness, his statements may be implicitly relied on.

The evidence taken on the subject of the sale of goods remaining unclaimed for the space of nine months in the public stores will be next examined. The following table will exhibit, for the years 1838, 1839, and 1840, the amount of the appraised value of goods falling under the above description, the amount of duties accruing on the same, the excess of sale and the amount and into the

was charged with improperly paying to Mr. George A. Vasson near five thousand dollars on the 4th June, 1841, when he went out of office. This is not true: no money was paid him, but upon settlement of his accounts on that day, a receipt was taken for the daily advances of cash made to him to pay cartage and labor at the appraisers' stores during the three months previous.

Mr. James A. Smith, an agent in office, who is represented to have supplied stationery to the Inspection, improperly. This is not true. Mr. James was never appointed or retained in office by me for a single day. The charge that the general expenses of the Custom House have been under my administration increased, is not true, as the accounts and books show.

Mr. James A. Smith, or inference made against me that I am not susceptible of satisfactory explanation upon the exhibition of the truth. An opportunity to make such explanation was denied me before the Commissioners, notwithstanding the Board of Commissioners had an opportunity to cross-examine the record unless I had an opportunity to cross-examine the witnesses.

Mr. Ponder's report is fully based upon what he calls the truth, and is given without giving me an opportunity either for explanation, or to present the truth upon the subject, to which that testimony relates.

There is no person named Ponder in the records of the persons and standers of this pretended report. Yours, &c.

**THE**